

Coins

Go East: Travel tip for the compleat collector

By Roger Boye

WHEN THE LATE Louis Eliasberg Sr. began collecting coins seriously in the 1930s, he wanted a sample of every coin the United States Mint had made. Many of his fellow collectors no doubt thought it an "impossible," foolish goal. But Eliasberg persisted.

By the 1950s he had put together the only complete collection of U.S. coins in existence. Last month it was put on display at the Philadelphia Mint as part of that city's Bicentennial celebration.

If you are in Philadelphia before next Dec. 31, stop at the Mint at 5th and Arch streets and view the collection. For the average collector still trying to fill the blue holes in the Lincoln cent coin folder [1940-on], Eliasberg's collection is mind-boggling. It has a specimen of every coin [every date and mint mark] minted for regular circulation since the Coinage Act of 1792.

Included are several coins valued at more than \$100,000, such as one of the three known 1822 \$5 gold pieces. [Eliasberg bought it in 1940

for \$14,000.] Described by acquaintances as quiet and unassuming, Eliasberg died in February at the age of 80.

Visitors are welcome at the Philadelphia Mint from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

IF VACATION travels this year take you to New York City, you might enjoy the American Numismatic Society Museum, on Broadway between 155th and 156th streets.

A new exhibit features money and money substitutes used in Colonial America. The exhibit is introduced with an audio-visual show.

NEXT TIME a quarter jams in a vending machine, don't kick the machine. Pinch the coin instead.

A few vending machine operators have complained that some of the new Bicentennial quarters in circulation are too thick and are jamming machines.

Some quarters may indeed be too thick or too thin, but that is a problem with all quarters,

not just the Bicentennial type, a U.S. Mint spokesperson was quoted in *Coin World*, a weekly numismatic newspaper.

The quarter is the most difficult coin to produce with exact specifications. Although the difference in thickness is slight [it would take sophisticated equipment to detect], the sensitive mechanisms of some vending machines will not accept "fat" quarters.

THE LAST FOUR of 28 Canadian Olympic silver coins have been released. The coins are produced by the Canadian government to help commemorate and raise money for the Olympics, which begin in July.

The Olympic Village and Olympic Flame are depicted on the last two \$5 silver coins. The Olympic Stadium and Olympic Velodrome [site of cycling and judo events] are shown on the last two \$10 silver coins.

Price of the coins to collectors depends on the type of holders and whether proof or uncirculated coins are desired. For more information, write Canadian Olympic Coin Program, 1251 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020.